

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-17

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TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

INFO AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: ETRD, MX

SUBJECT: MEXICAN LIME OIL EXPORTS

1. THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT HAS REQUESTED THAT THE USG REQUIRE A CERTIFICATE OF QUALITY FOR MEXICO'S LIME OIL EXPORTS. ACCORDING TO GOM REPRESENTATIVES (CALDERON AND BRAVO), THE GOM CONTROLS THE EXPORTATION OF LIME OIL TO THE US BY REQUIRING THAT ALL SUCH EXPORTS BE ACCOMPANIED BY A CERTIFICATE OF QUALITY ISSUED BY THE MEXICAN NATIONAL UNION OF LIME OIL PRODUCERS (UNPAL). CALDERON SAID THAT SHIPMENTS OUTSIDE THE UNPAL QUOTA SCHEME VIOLATE MEXICAN LAW AND RENDER LESS EFFECTIVE THE FUNCTIONING OF THE PRODUCERS' COOPERATIVE. SUCH ILLEGAL SHIPMENTS ARE NOW A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF THE TRADE AND THE GOM WISHES

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TO STOP THEM BY HAVING US CUSTOMS REGULATE THESE CERTIFICATES AT THE BORDER. HE INDICATED THE QUALITY OF THE TWO EXPORTS WAS COMPARABLE, ALTHOUGH THIS WAS LATER QUALIFIED BY BRAVO. CALDERON IMPLIED THAT OBJECTIVE OF CERTIFICATE SYSTEM WAS TO INCREASE RETURNS TO LICENSED PRODUCERS THROUGH A QUOTA SYSTEM.

2. USG AGENCIES ARE INTERESTED IN COOPERATING WITH THE MEXICANS IF WE CAN DETERMINE THIS WOULD BE IN US INTERESTS. WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE MEXICAN PRODUCT AND THE PRODUCERS COOPERATIVE AND ANY SIGNS THAT GOM GOALS ARE HIGHER PRICES AND RESTRICTION OF TRADE. MEXICO PROVIDES ABOUT 60 PERCENT OR MORE OF US IMPORTS. WHILE THE SECOND LARGEST SUPPLIER, HAITI, MIGHT BE ABLE TO STEP IN IF MEXICO UPS THE PRICE, WE UNDERSTAND THEY AND PERHAPS OTHERS HAVE EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN COPYING MEXICO'S COOPERATIVE SYSTEM.

3. THE EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO PROVIDE THE DEPARTMENT WITH THE ORIGINS AND AIMS OF UNPAL, WHAT THE MAKEUP OF THE LIME OIL PRODUCTION INDUSTRY IN MEXICO IS, WHAT RULES UNPAL MEMBERS MUST ADHERE TO THAT RESTRICT PRODUCTION OR TRADE OR OTHERWISE MIGHT BE CONSIDERED TO DISADVANTAGE US IMPORTERS OR CONSUMERS. ANY INFORMATION THE EMBASSY CAN DEVELOP REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THE LIME OIL PRODUCED BY UNPAL MEMBERS AS COMPARED WITH THAT OF NON-MEMBERS WILL BE APPRECIATED.

4. WE ARE EXAMINING THE POSSIBILITY OF COOPERATING WITH THE GOM FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF A TRADE OFF FOR AN ITEM WE WANT. AN OBVIOUS CONSIDERATION IS US LEMON OIL. ANY COMMENTS THE EMBASSY MAY OFFER WITH RESPECT TO THE GOM'S WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT SUCH A TRADE OFF AND ITS POTENTIAL VALUE TO US WILL BE HELPFUL. ROGERS

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